The Caves of Confection

An adventure for 6 D&D® game or AD&D® game characters, levels 1–3

Illustration by James Holloway

by Rick Reid

Notes for the DM

This lighthearted adventure is designed for six 1st–3rd level Basic D&D® game characters. Statistics for AD&D® game monsters also are provided for DMs who wish to run this adventure as an AD&D game scenario; AD&D game statistics appear in shaded areas.

At the beginning of the adventure, it is assumed the PCs will come to the Keep at Ongoin, intending to rest and buy provisions. However, you should feel free to concoct another reason for the PCs to go there if it suits your needs better.

Introduction

Even the most stalwart band of adventurers must stop sometimes for rest and provisioning, and according to your maps, the nearest city is the Keep at Ongoin.

The Keep at Ongoin is much like every other heavily fortified city that you have encountered in your travels. The standard high, thick stone walls surround the town, and the only entrance is a pair of barred wooden gates.

Following standard procedure, you approach the gates and shout for entrance. After a wait of several minutes, you shout again. Still no response. Getting impatient, you dismount and bang on the gates. Almost immediately, a muffled voice from the other side replies, "What's the password?"

Part 1: Keep Ongoin

After the PCs have taken several guesses at the password, another muffled voice responds, "Try 'Pancake.' " If someone in the party replies "Pancake," both gates swing open revealing an empty cobblestone street leading into the center of town. If the PCs pass through the gates, they are set upon by a mob of villagers shouting "Sweets! Sweets! Give us your sweets!" A mob of more than 200 rush from their hiding places behind the open gates, swarm over the PCs, pull them from their horses, and rip through their packs and clothing.

Villagers (207): AC 9; HD 1; hp 3 each; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; D special; Save as Normal Human; ML 6; AL N; XP 5 each; SA hit indicates grab and hold until victim makes an open doors roll, if three or more villagers hold a victim he is pulled down.

AC 10; HD 1; MV 12; #AT 1; Dmg pummel/wrestle; THAC0 20; Int Ave. (8-10); SZ M; AL NG (but crazed); XP 15 each

After several minutes of this mayhem, a shrill whistle blows and a troop of guards rushes into the melee, pulling the villagers off the characters and berating them: "Leave them alone; they're tourists!" When the guards have succeeded in disentangling the last villager from the ruckus, a portly gentleman with a long, curling white mustache approaches the party. Turning to the villagers, now shuffling around with downcast eyes and guilty looks on their faces, he says, "Is this any way to treat guests? I'm ashamed of you! Now I want you to apologize to these nice people right now!" Several of the villagers mumble insincere apologies while the guards help the PCs up, dust off their clothing, and help them gather up their belongings. While this is going on, the villagers slink away, occasionally giving the PCs a hungry glance.

When order has been restored, the portly gentleman introduces himself as Farfel, mayor of Ongoin, and apologizes to the group for the actions of the townspeople. Then with a wistful look in his eyes, he asks, "Ah, you don't happen to have any gumdrops, do you?"

When the party has replied in the negative, the mayor gives a loud sigh and says:

"Ah, I thought not. Oh well. Please, let me escort you into town while I try to explain the behavior of the townspeople. You see, for years Ongoin has had the reputation of providing the finest sweets, candies, and desserts in the realm. In fact, the king himself would not think of using any other peppermint candy for his indigestion but that which we manufacture. But now that has all changed. You see, we obtain the raw materials for our creations from a series of most wonderful caverns to the north of town. Within these caverns—dubbed the Caves of Confection by the locals—run veins of pure rock sugar, bubbling pools of caramel, and natural springs of chocolate sauce.

"Needless to say, with such a treasure at our disposal, it was only natural that our village should base its economy on the creation of sweets. But several days ago, a group of sugar miners came running back into town with stories of horrible creatures that had taken up residence in the caverns. A battalion of guards was sent to investigate, but never returned. I had no choice but to post the mines off-limits, even though it meant the death of our industry. The villagers, raised on a diet of sugary treats, were driven half-mad by the absence of their accustomed diet and took to rioting and worse things. In desperation, I sent away for a wagonload of sugar from the closest village. But it, along with another wagon of kitchen utensils, never arrived. Attempts were made to provide substitutes, hoping our customers would not notice the difference. But as you can see the results were less than successful."

With this statement, the mayor points out several shops advertising such things as: "Salt Cakes," "Vinegar Buns," "Mustard Pies," "Brine-filled BonBons," "Fish Balls," and "Meat Wafers." All the shops have a large closed sign in front.

"To make matters worse," the mayor continues, "This is the year my wife is to host the annual Mayors' Wives' Tea Party for all the mayors' wives in the area. Without any teacakes or lady fingers for the guests, her party will be the social disaster of the year.

"But, this is not your problem. Unless, of course, you want to take on the job of cleaning out the caverns—for which you will receive a handsome reward and the undying gratitude of the townspeople, not to mention my wife. Well, what do you say?"

If the characters agree to take on this task, the mayor shows them the road leading north from town to the caverns. If they wish to obtain further provisions, a trader's shop contains all basic equipment at twice book price.

Part II: The Caves of Confection

A. The Entrance

After a journey of about a half hour, through rocky terrain dotted with growths of thick shrubbery, you approach the face of a towering cliff. At the cliff's base is a dark, roughly circular entrance about 12 feet in diameter. Two vaguely humanoid figures stand to either side of the entrance, barely concealed by scraggly bushes. An overpoweringly sweet smell fills the air.

As the PCs approach the entrance, they see that the figures are nothing more than wooden cutouts, painted to resemble fierce goblins, and propped up against the cliff. They will also see, directly above the entrance, a crudely-painted wooden sign reading "Cave of Good Eats—Monsters Welcome—Humans Go Home." Looking into the entrance, the characters see a 12-foot by 12-foot cave extending 30 feet north and ending in a "T" intersection. Walls, floors, and ceiling are hard and rocky. Closer examination reveals a sprinkling of sugar covering the cavern floor.

B. Equipment

Approximately 10 feet into the cavern, a series of two dozen spikes are driven into the west wall at eye level. Twelve battered metal helmets and 12 lanterns hang from the spikes.

The helmets were worn by the sugar miners as protection in the event of falling rock candy. They are painted with names such as "Stinky," "Shorty," "Waffle-ears," and "Fred." The lanterns are filled with oil and still usable.

C. Billy

After a distance of 40 feet, the cavern takes a bend to the east. As you approach the bend, you hear a loud slurping noise coming from around the corner.

Sitting on the cave floor, sucking on a piece of rock candy is a young boy with red hair and freckles. When the boy notices the party, he hides his candy

and tells them to "Get your own." If the young lad is questioned nicely or bribed, he reveals that his name is Billy and he lives with his Grandpa in Ongoin. He tells the PCs that he was tired of not having any candy, so he snuck away and came to the mine to get some.

Billy got his candy from the rock sugar veins directly ahead. He brags to the PCs that he snuck past all the monsters working in the mine and grabbed a piece off the floor without being noticed. If asked about the number of creatures in the mine, he puffs up his chest and says, "Oh, about a hundred."

If Billy is threatened, grabbed, or told to go home, he starts yelling, "Ow! Ow! Ow!" in a loud voice and tries to run away. The ensuing commotion is sure to bring the mine workers from the sugar mines **(area E)** to investigate. If Billy is left alone, he follows the party for awhile, then wanders off.

Billy: AC 10; HD ½; hp 2; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; D 1 (kick or bite); Save as Normal Human; ML 6; AL N; XP 5

AC 10; HD ½; hp 2; MV 12; #AT 1; Dmg pummel; THAC0 20; Int Ave. (8-10); SZ M; AL N(G); XP 15

D. Chocolate Stream

After several feet, the passage branches off to the north and continues east. From the east passage you pick up faint sounds of digging, picks banging, and occasional voices. To the north, you detect a sweet, but faint, odor.

If the PCs take the north passage, read the following:

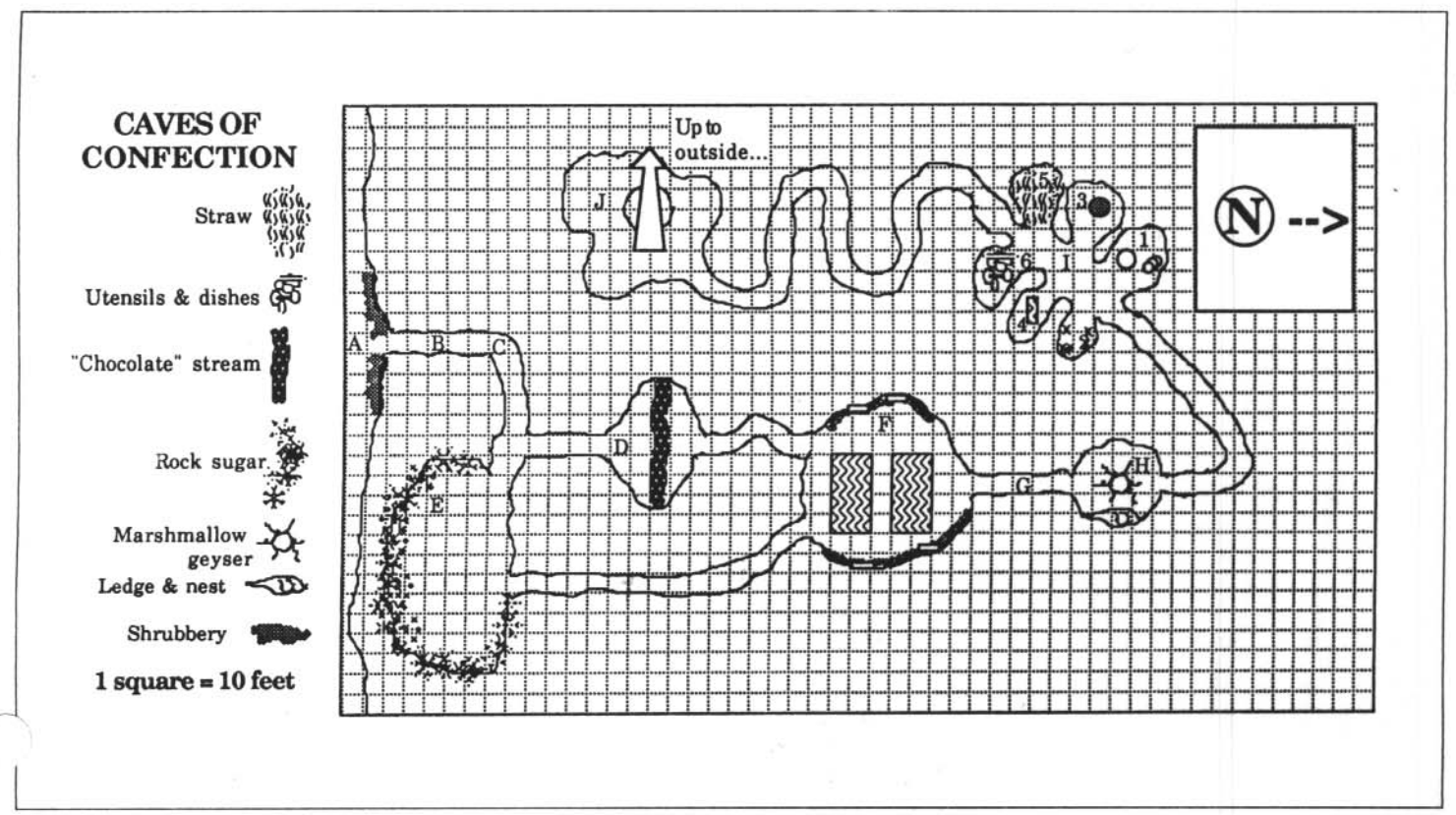
A thick, cloying odor of chocolate wafts from the entrance of this chamber. Inside the 40-foot diameter room, an 8-foot wide stream of thick, brown fluid flows sluggishly from an opening in the east wall, runs across the chamber, and disappears into a similar opening in the west wall. Several buckets and ladles lie on the floor. Propped up against the south wall are 12 humanoid figures, apparently composed of the same brown material, wrapped in red bows. Across from the stream, there is an opening in the north wall.

The stream, which only runs to a depth of three feet at this particular spot, is not actually chocolate, but is composed of run-off from the sugar mines mixed with naturally-occuring subterranian vegetation and minerals giving it the taste, appearance, and texture of real chocolate. The 12 figures are the original guards sent to investigate the disturbance at the mine. They were captured and dipped alive in the chocolate. Examining the figures reveals a small tag on each one reading: "To Our Master, Twink—Eat In Good Health."

E. Sugar Mine

The passage opens into a huge cavernous area, almost 120 feet in diameter. The rough rock walls are impregnated with thick veins of a clear crystaline substance with a very sweet odor. A dozen large, hairy, dog-faced creatures work the veins with picks and shovels, and load the debris into wheelbarrows. The the biggest creature wheels the wheelbarrows out an opening in the north wall.

Until the party takes some action, the creatures (gnolls) will not be aware of their presence. The sound of digging



and picking echoes loudly throughout this chamber and mixes with the gnolls' cursing and grunting. The gnolls are mining the rock sugar for the Snack Dragon, and their fear of his anger is the only thing that keeps them working.

If the party moves to attack, the gnolls reciprocate, swinging their picks and shovels. If the gnolls lose more than half their number, one gnoll throws down his pick, and in crude Common cries out, "That's it! We don't have to put up with this! Come on, we're going on strike!" With that, the other gnolls toss down their weapons and follow their leader out the chamber and to the cave entrance.

Any gnolls that are captured and questioned reveal that the boss of the caves is a "big lizard that eats like a pig." The only reason they are working is that he threatened to eat them if they didn't keep his appetite satisfied. If the party asks directions to the big boss, the gnolls gesture in the direction of the north passage. There are three wheelbarrows, six picks, six shovels, and a lot of rock sugar in the room.

Gnolls (12): AC 5; HD 2; hp 15, 13, 3@12, 10 2@9, 6, 2@5, 4; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D 2-7; Save as Fighter 2; ML 8; AL C; XP 20 each

AC 5; HD 2; hp 15, 13, 3@12, 10, 2@9, 6, 2@5, 4; MV 9; #AT 1; Dmg 2-7; THAC0 19; Int Low (5-7); SZ L; AL CE; XP 35 each

F. Kitchen of Doom

A blast of intense heat eminates from this room, accompanied by clanging and banging sounds.

This 80-foot diameter room was used as a bakery, with heat provided by naturally occuring veins of magma which flow along the walls. Several large iron doors were built into the walls, and the items to be baked were placed into cavities behind the doors and heated by the magma. Two 40-foot long and 20-foot wide wooden tables, covered with bowls, spoons, and baking pans, are situated in the center of the room.

The room is currently occupied by eight bakery zombies wearing white hats and aprons reading "Kiss the Cook." As they are able to work 24 hours a day and can withstand the intense heat, the Snack Dragon **(area J)** has programmed them to bake treats to satisfy his voracious appetite. Raw materials from the sugar mines **(area E),** the chocolate stream **(area D),** the marshmallow geyser **(area H),** and the orc rooms **(area I),** are delivered here to be baked into desserts and goodies. The zombies ignore the PCs unless they interrupt them from their current task of baking dozens of gingerbread orcs (cookies). If attacked, they reciprocate by flinging batter, pans, bowls, and hot cookies.

On one of the tables is a thick leather-bound tome entitled *Cook Book of the Dead.* It contains instructions for summoning a Sweet Tooth Demon, a large dessert. Anyone attempting to read from the book will find his hand permanently stuck to the pages. Victims cannot put down the volume until they have gathered all the ingredients listed in the recipe (over 2,000 obscure spices and condiments) and mixed them according to instructions.

Zombies (8): AC 8; HD 2; hp 16, 2@14, 9, 2@8, 6, 4; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D 1-8 (claw) or 1-4 (hurled object); Save as Fighter 1; ML 12; AL X; XP 20 each; SA always lose initiative; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells.

AC 8; HD 2; MV 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (claw) or 1-4 (thrown object); THAC0 19; Int Non- (0); SZ M; AL N; XP 65 each; SA always lose inititive; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, death magic,* poisons, and cold, holy water inflicts 2-8 points damage

G. Gramps

A bobbing yellow light can be seen in the north passage. The light seems to be moving in your direction, but before you can take any action, the stillness is shattered by a gravelly voice yelling, "Billy! Billy!"

The voice belongs to Billy's **(area C)** grandfather, who is looking for the wayward lad. He carries a thick cane in one hand and a lantern in the other. His eyesight is very poor, and if approached by the PCs, he lashes out at them with his cane, mistaking them for monsters.

Gramps' hearing is just as bad as his eyesight. He carries an earhorn tucked in his belt, which he uses only if reminded of its presence. Anything the PCs say to Gramps is likely to be interpreted as an insult. If the party is able to relay to Gramps who they are and the nature of their intentions, he starts in on one of his long-winded stories of his own youth when he was an adventurer, punctuating his tale by grabbing one of the PC's swords and swinging it wildly around his head.

If the group can convince Gramps that they have indeed seen Billy and have a general idea as to his whereabouts, Gramps continues south, shouting and banging on the walls with his cane.

Gramps: AC 10; HD ½; hp 2; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; D 1-4 (cane); Normal Human; ML 6; AL N; XP 5

AC 10; HD ½; hp 2; MV 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (cane); THAC0 20; Int Ave. (8-10); SZ M; AL N(G); XP 15

H. Marshmallow Fluff

The walls, floor and ceiling of this 40-foot diameter cavern are covered with a thick, gooey white substance. There is a 12-inch diameter hole in the center of the floor and an exit directly across the chamber in the north wall. A 6-foot wide stone ledge jutts from the east wall, about 12 feet above the ground.

A large pile of sticks and small rocks sits on the ledge; it resembles a nest of some type. An undistinguishable lump squats in the nest's center. The entire affair is covered with the gooey white substance.

The PCs are in the cavern containing the marshmallow geyser. Thick veins of sugar, heated by bubbling underground pools, simmer under the surface until their consistancy is that of thick marshmallow. Periodically, the bubbling mass erupts from the hole in the floor, spraying the room and its contents with a thick coating of marshmallow.

The lump in the nest is a marshmallow harpy, which has grown quite fond of the taste of marshmallow. She attempts to lure the characters into the room with her song. If she is successful, she waits for the geyser to erupt and coat her hapless victims in marshmallow, rendering them immobile. She can then eat them at her leisure.

Once the PCs have entered the room, check each round for an eruption. A 1 or 2 on 1d6 means the geyser has erupted,

and anyone caught in the room must save vs. paralysis or be rendered immobile. Even if the save is successful, the character's movement and attacks are cut by half. The harpy is immune to the effects of the geyser, and will only leave her nest to attack in the event that the majority of the group is rendered immobile, or if they try to leave the room.

If the harpy is defeated, the characters can search her nest. Inside are 36 sticky gold pieces, a bib with a picture of a lobster on the front (new magic item), a vial of clear liquid (new magic item), and a toothbrush.

Marshmallow Harpy: AC 7; HD 3*; hp 21; MV 60'(20')/flying 150'/50'; #AT 2 claws, 1 weapon, + special; D 1-4/1-4/1-6; Save as Fighter 6; ML 7; AL C; XP 50; SA song causes saving throw vs. spell or victim is *charmed.*

AC 7; HD 7; hp 21; MV 6, Fl 15 (C); #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; THAC0 13; Int Low (5-7); SZ M; AL CE; XP 1400; SA can sing in combat, song casues saving throw vs. spell or victim is *charmed—charmed* victims immediately proceed toward the harpy and allow themselves to be slain, the *charm* lasts until the song stops, touch causes save vs. spell or victim is *charmed* for 20 + 1d10 hours, the *charm* is broken when the harpy is slain.

New Magic Items

Bib of Good Eating: When worn, the wearer is compelled to eat only good, nutritious meals, forsaking any snacks or sweets. A sucessful save vs. spell negates the *bib's* effects.

Potion of Appetite Control: Anyone imbibing this clear, colorless, liquid will experience an immediate feeling of fullness for a period of 13-24 hours (1d12 + 12), and has no desire for food during that time.

I. Jinsu Orcs

After a distance of several feet, the northern passage curves toward the west. The western passage is littered with butter knives, forks, and soup spoons. Ahead you notice several openings carved into the north and south walls.

The openings lead into the rooms of a tribe of jinsu orcs. If the party stops to investigate the silverware, or passes by the openings, the orcs pour out of the rooms and attempt to capture and subdue them. The orcs, employed as guards, waiters, cooks, and dishwashers by the Snack Dragon **(area J)**, are armored in pots, pans, and roast platters and brandish meat grinders, potato peelers, cheese graters, egg beaters, and apple corers as weapons (plunder from the wagons bound for Ongoin). The orcs attempt to overwhelm the PCs and capture them alive to present to the snack dragon. During the fighting, the orcs continually call for the PCs to surrender. Because of the overwhelming number of orcs, the PCs should be encouraged to do so.

Rooms

All the rooms are roughly 12-feet square and contain the following:

1. A huge tub of soapy water and a tall pile of dirty dishes. Six orcs are washing dishes in here.

2. Numerous bags of flour, spices, herbs and seasonings. Several barrels contain vinegar, vanilla extract, sugar water, and maple syrup.

3. A large fire pit dug into the center of the room is filled with burning wood. Above the fire is an iron caldron being stirred by two orcs in white aprons. The orcs are boiling refined rock sugar to make caramel.

4. A long wooden table piled high with various types of cookbooks. Six orcs are pouring over the books, jotting down notes and recipes.

5. The entire floor of this room is layered with straw. Twelve orcs are lying on the floor, resting from their duties. Each orc is alternately polishing his weapon and licking a cinnamon stick.

6. This room is piled high with a jumble of cooking utensils, kitchen implements and dinnerware. Six orcs are attempting to make some sort of order out of the shambles.

Jinsu Orcs (36): AC 6; HD 1; hp 5 each; MV 120'(40'); #AT 1; D 1-6; Save as Fighter 1; ML 6; AL C; XP 10 each

AC 6; HD 1; hp 5 each; MV 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; THAC0 19; Int Ave. (8-10); SZ M; AL LE; XP 15 each

J. Lair of the Snack Dragon

As you are lead down the twisting passage, a loud roar of "FOOOOOD!" reverberates down the corridor from ahead. The orcs, now visibly shaken, hurry you along through an archway set into the stone wall.

Sitting on an immense pile of dirty dishes, frosting bowls, non-returnable bottles, wrappers, cake plates, pie pans, cookie tins, and candy molds is a large cotton-candy pink dragon. The dragon's chocolate-smeared jaws are firmly wrapped around the protruding stick of an all-day sucker. Rows of sugar donuts ring his twin horns and his long spiked tail is curled protectively around a pot of jellybeans. A severely-stained bib is tied around his thin neck, absorbing the frequent dribble of drool that leaks from the corner of his mouth. Above the dragon, a large opening in the ceiling allows the moonlight to sparkle off his sugar-coated scales.

The dragon looks you up and down with a hungry eye, removes the sucker from his mouth, waves at the orcs, and issues a command, "Prepare the kitchens! I have a recipe for carmel-covered adventurers dipped in toasted almonds that I'm dying to try!"

At this command, the orcs exit the room, leaving you to face the dragon. With the same hungry gleam in his eye, the dragon address you.

"I suppose good manners dictate that I should introduce myself before I eat you. I am Twink, a very rare snack dragon. Most of my race, unfortunately, died out because they could not find enough sweets to sustain them. We have quite a voracious appetite, you know. But lucky me! I came across this wonderous cave in my travels. It contains enough sweets to sustain me for years. Isn't that wonderful!"

At this point, if the PCs take no action against the dragon, he starts poking them with his sucker stick to see if they are "juicy" enough. The characters must try to defeat Twink before the orcs return in six turns to bake them. Twink is very intelligent (but greedy) and not easily tricked, nor will an out-and-out attack be likely to succeed. One possible solution would be to get him to use either of the magic items found in area H,

causing him to lose his appetite or desire for sweets and possibly vacate the cave.

If the PCs attack Twink, he uses his breath weapon in an attempt to encase them in a tough candy shell. A strength of 18 or better is needed to break out of the shell. Twink does have one weak spot, his stomach. There is a 5% chance that any successful attack will hit his stomach, causing him to double over in pain for 1d6 rounds.

Snack Dragon (Twink): AC 3; HD 6**; hp 40; MV 90'(30')/flying 240'(80'); #AT 2 claws, 1 bite or breath weapon; D 1-6,1-6/3-24; Save as Fighter 6; ML 8; AL N; XP 725; SA breath weapon usable 3x/day, cone of candy coating 2' wide at mouth, 80' long, and 30' wide at end, victims must save vs. breath or be coated and immobilized for 2d12 turns, 18 strength to break out.

AC 3; HD 6; hp 40; MV 9, Fl 24 (C); #AT 3; Dmg 1-6 + 1/1-6 + 1/3-24 + 1; THAC0 15; Int Ave. (8-10); SZ L; AL N(E); XP 1400; SA breath weapon 3/day, cone of candy coating 2' wide at mouth, 80' long, and 30' wide at end, victims must save vs. breath or be coated and immobilized for 2d12 turns, feat of strength to break out.

If the characters manage to defeat the snack dragon, or convince him to let them escape, they can climb up the pile of trash and exit out the hole in the ceiling (this is how Twink entered). Once out of the hole, the PCs can circle around to the front of the cave and the road back to town.

Part III: The Reward

When the party returns to the village, the mayor meets them to listen to their story. Unless the PCs have defeated the snack dragon, or banished him from the caves, they are not eligible for their reward. If the PCs were successful, the mayor rings the town bell, calling the villagers to assemble. He relates their story to the townspeople, highly praising the PCs' bravery. When he gets to the part of the story where the PCs defeated the dragon and freed the caves, the villagers shout, "Sweets! Sweets!" and bolt for the caves, trampling the mayor and the PCs. After apologizing to the party, the mayor invites them to a banquet to be held in their honor the following evening when the villagers have "calmed down."

The banquet is a rousing success, consisting of every sort of delicacy imaginable. And just when you think you could not eat another bite, the mayor taps his spoon on his wine glass and calls for "dessert." As you gape in astonishment, six carts draped in fine linen are wheeled out in front of you. The coverings are whipped off with a flourish, revealing life-size peanut-butter fudge statues of your party.

"Dig in!" the mayor beams, "They're all yours!" With weak smiles you reach for a piece of ear. Seeing your disappointed looks, the mayor gives a chuckle and nudges you with his elbow, "I think you'll like the filling the best," he whispers, "Gold coin I think the cook said it was!"

The DM is free to assign whatever monetary reward he thinks is reasonable for his campaign; 200–500 gp for each character is a good rule of thumb. ❑

Enter the Gates of Ravens Bluff

Ravens Bluff, The Living City, is an ever-changing city nestled in the Forgotten Realms. It is a city filled with memorable characters, fascinating shops and businesses, political intrigue, and, of course, adventure.

Ravens Bluff and the lands around it belong to the ROLE PLAYING GAME ASSOCIATION™ Network, an international organization of role playing game enthusiasts. The characters, buildings, and adventures in this Gateway Pack are created by RPGA™ Network members.

Enter the gates of Ravens Bluff, a city that is ever-changing and growing, a city you can be a part of in the Forgotten Realms.

This new accessory, *Gateway to RAVENS BLUFF™, The Living City* is available only through the RPGA Network. Call 1-800-558-5977 to order **your** copy today!

TSR, Inc.

FORGOTTEN REALMS, ROLE PLAYING GAME ASSOCIATION, RPGA, RAVENS BLUFF, and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. 1989 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.